



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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BOOKS.

"En hoexkens ende boexkens."

DEAR EDITOR,—I think "H.B." will like a book of songs for little children called "Six Song Stories," music by Molloy, price 2/-, published by Chappell; or "Sing me a Song," music by Alfred Scott Gatty. Both are charming, and the songs easy.

G. S. F.

DEAR EDITOR,—I should like to recommend to "H.B." "Child's Garden of Verses," words by R. L. Stevenson, and music by Mary Carmichael, published at 1s.; Gatty's "Songs for Little Singers," in three vols., each 2s. 6d., in paper covers. These are very simple both in words and music. Brahm's "Nursery Rhymes," 1s., are very pretty, but the music is not quite so simple. The above can be obtained from the Stores or Whiteley's at a discount of 3d. in the 1s. May I also recommend a wonderfully cheap edition of Sonatinas, Rondos, &c., published in the Litolf edition, No. 2007, at 1s. 8d. This "Sonatinen-Album" contains 32 pieces, (in good print, fingered by Clemens Schultze, with notes at the bottom of the pages shewing how turns and graces are to be played) by Beethoven, Hummel, Schumann, Dussek, Clementi, Kuhlman, Steibelt, Mozart, &c.

H. A. P.

DEAR EDITOR,—In answer to H.B.'s enquiry for songs for little children, may I mention Æsop's Fables set to music, 2 parts, 1s. each, B. Williams, 19, Paternoster Row.

M. A. W.

DEAR EDITOR,—As I originally recommended "La Nature," I cannot let A. A. J.'s extraordinary remarks on that periodical pass unchallenged. I have taken it for nearly 20 years, and am puzzled how any one could think descriptions of the marvels of nature and the clever inventions of men to be unsuitable reading for the young. I did not recommend it for mere children, but rather for boys, especially as the descriptions of machinery, etc., with plenty of illustrations are just the thing to interest them. I think A. A. J. must have got some other paper by mistake, as I do not think any one could possibly object to the *right* "La Nature;" it is edited by Tissandier, and published by Mason. I am very sorry I gave a wrong title to "La Conquête de la Lune;" it is rather an old book, and I was only reminded of it by seeing an English translation, and thought its title, "The Conquest of the Moon," was an exact translation of the English one, but seem to have been mistaken. I should have thought, however, that Hachette could have identified it, though it is possibly out of print.

M. L.

DEAR EDITOR,—Perhaps the most important Educational event of the past month has been the publication of the New Code for Evening Schools. Everyone who has studied at all the working of our system of public elementary education must have felt, to quote the words of Mr. Airy, one of H.M.'s Inspectors, that "whilst everybody is doing his best to perfect the work up to the age of 14, a deplorable proportion of the energy expended vanishes into thin air." It is to be hoped that the new rules, drawn up under the enlightened supervision of Mr. Acland, will supply a much-needed stimulus to Evening Continuation Schools, and enable those who, as day scholars, have acquired to some extent the use of intellectual tools, may learn to employ them for mental development, and to render themselves more efficient workers.

A valuable article in the *Spectator* of April 15, entitled "Property in Character," points out that many parents (and even teachers) require from their children the same instantaneous obedience that they require from their dog or their horse, not merely when that obedience is for the child's benefit, but simply because it is gratifying to their own sense of property in the child to see it echo their minutest wishes. Up to a certain point, of course, ready obedience to orders of which the reason is not understood is as essential in schools and families as it is in an army, but it should rest on the belief that these orders will be given for sufficient reasons, and not for the mere satisfaction of those who give them. What a parent ought to wish for in his children is, indeed, instant obedience to orders given for the child's good, and an eager readiness to trust its parent, but beyond this, as much that is distinct and individual as the child's nature can provide. To desire to exercise the privileges of ownership over the character of another, is desiring to make it something infinitely less, infinitely poorer, than it was intended to be.

I think I have before referred to Mrs. Panton's articles in *Woman* called "As the Twig is Bent"—I have before me now the sixth of the series (May 24), in which she urges the importance of parents "making friends" of their children even in the nursery. From their earliest days children should recognize that their parents are their best friends, and should never feel the lack of sympathy even in their smallest hopes and fears. If from the first they are taken as far as possible into their parents' confidence, there will be less discontent on their part when they see other children enjoy advantages that their own parents cannot provide, and there will be less likelihood in after life of their making friends for themselves who may be unwelcome in the home circle.

In another paper "Amica" points out that one cause why family life so often falls short of ideal happiness is the want of strict justice between its members. After enforcing this in the relation of husband and wife to each other, she says, "Let the children be taught from the cradle that they have no rights over each other, save in so far as common right governs them all. . . . Let parents remember that the children have rights as well as duties. . . . Let the children remember that the parents have privileges as well as responsibilities. . . . As they grow up let the children all understand that they are to be something, to do something, that they are perfectly independent of each other, though children of one father, yet with equal

rights and privileges. . . . No elder brother or sister is to decide what the others shall be or do; no younger brother or sister shall be an unfair aggressor on the rights or possessions of their seniors. If they borrow from each other they must pay again, and the less borrowing the better.

But people may say 'Is there to be no give-and-take, is there to be no kindness, no generosity in the family?'—Certainly, but no injustice; no claiming the services and self-denial of others as a right; no selfish demands on the time or the possession of our blood relations on the high-handed and quite unjustifiable plea, 'He is my brother,' 'She is my sister.' Let family life in all its relations be established first on the lines of fairness, as between man and man, and love, joy and peace will not fail to follow." This writer also thinks that boys and girls should, if possible, receive exactly the same preliminary education, should alike learn to sew, to row, to run, to cook, and that history, and science, and languages, and mechanics, at the outset should be taught them together.

Those who were interested in the article I quoted last month on "Children's Music" may be glad to know of "The Child's Garden of Verses," by R. L. Stevenson, and "The Children's Sacred Wreath," a collection of well-known nursery hymns, both set to music by Mary Carmichael. The medodies are simple and charming, and the little ones soon pick them up, and warble them as they lie awake in their cots, at least mine do.

June 7.

PATER JUNIOR.

To H.B.—Answer to question in May number of *Parents' Review*.—"The Baby's Opera" (coloured), illustrated by Walter Crane, is a charming simple book of Nursery Rhymes. (Publishers, G. Routledge & Sons). "National Nursery Rhymes," by J. W. Elliott, with illustrations (G. Routledge & Sons), is a larger book, a little more advanced, and most delightful. Price of either, I think, about 5s.

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—You might be interested to hear about an idea for the early teaching of Composition, which we have also borrowed from the Germans.

I give each child above eight years of age, ten words picked at random from the dictionary to write down. I then explain carefully the meaning of each, and the child must bring to its next lesson ten sentences written out, each containing one of these words, so that I can judge if the pupil has thoroughly grasped the meaning of each word.

B. A. T.

DEAR EDITOR,—When the last term ended, and holidays began, my children came to me and said, Mother, may we learn something to do with our hands in the holidays? I then suggested Holiday Lessons, and asked them if they would like to take an hour each morning, and we would take the first day, modelling; the second, basket-work; and the third, bent-iron work, and then begin again. They are delighted with this, and the youngest of four has been allowed to join us, and is quickly learning to make his little brain direct his hands. Children so often—strange as it may sound to many—get so tired of perpetual play, that other parents may be only too delighted to adopt our new plan.

B. JOWETT.

Quinta do Pico de São João, Funchal, Madeira,
May 12th, 1893.

DEAR EDITOR,—Some copies of the *Parents' Review*, together with the book on Home Education were put into my hands a little while ago by Mrs. Gordon.

In speaking of them afterwards to her I was able to say how much they had interested me, because they, to a certain extent, legitimized some heterodox proceedings of my own in the training of my little son. Mrs. Gordon thought it might interest you to hear of any steps taken in the direction to which the *Parents' Review* is a guide, and so I am troubling you with a little of my experience.

You will see by the heading of my letter that I am a resident in Madeira, and will probably not be surprised to learn that Funchal, our city, is by no means a modern Athens. Means of education for English children are not abundant. My little boy, who is just eight years old, goes to a small private school which is open about two hours a day, and where daily portions of Pinnock's Catechism, Guide to Knowledge, Poetry and Spelling are served out. I do not believe in solitary education for a dreamy, highly imaginative boy, and therefore rather send him to be with other children for two hours a day, than keep him at home with his baby sister.